SOME NEW BOOKS.

German Life at the Close of the Middle Ages.

Even among persons who suppose themselves well educated, few comprehend the depth and the extent of the damage wrought in Germany by the religious wars. As regards all the elements of civilization, the state of things in Germany in the year 1500 was greatly superior to that which prevailed in 1650, or just after the Peace of Westphalia. It is as true of Germany as Thorold Rogers has shown it to be true of England, that the fifteenth century and the early years of the sixteenth were the golden age of the husbandman, the artisan, and the laborer. It was a period in which wealth was very generally distributed, for wages were relatively high, agricultural produce was cheap, and land was valued, as a rule, at twenty years' purchase. Later, there was visible a marked decline in the style of living. Before the Reformation, for instance, wine was abundant and freely used. Afterward it became a luxury. The enjoyments of the middle class were stinted, and even those of the richer class were few. Popular education decayed, and popular literature and art underwent eclipse. The best attainable account of a transformation which constitutes one of the most remarkable phenomena in the history of Europe is contained in the monumental work by JOHANNES JANSSEN. An English version of his *History of the German People at the Close of the Middle Ages* has recently been published in London, in two volumes, by Kegan, Paul & Co. It was no easy task which the translators, M. A. MITCHELL and A. M. CHRISTIE, had before them. But they have executed it with uncommon care and singular success. They have rendered a great service to those readers of history who are less interested in dynasties and wars than in the lives and thoughts of the great body of a people. Only one of the four books into which the work before us is divided deals with political questions. The other three describe the condition of husbandmen and artisans, the development of commerce and capital, the spread of the art of printing, the arrangements for elementary as well as for higher education, and the artistic outcome of the national vitality in architecture, sculpture, and painting, in wood and copper engraving, in music and poetry, and in prose literature. We purpose here to show how generally diffused was the art of printing before the Reformation; how much thought had been taken for elementary schools before the sixteenth century began; what wages were paid for skilled and unskilled labor; to what a height trade and the accumulation of capital had been carried, and, finally, to give a brief outline of German popular life at the close of the mediæval epoch, as it was reflected by contemporary art.

I.

A footnote to the first chapter of this book, based on Van der Linde's work on Gutenberg, puts an end to numerous errors, legends, and falsifications which were formerly current with regard to the invention of printing. It is now well known that Johann Gensfleisch zu Gutenberg of Mentz was not so much the inventor of printing as of typography, that is the formation of cast movable letters. Centuries before Gutenberg, the art was known of transferring figures, pictures, and texts from one surface to another by means of pressure. It was no new idea that letters, and hence, also, words, lines, sentences, and whole pages, could be engraved and printed. The Chinese block printing goes back at least as far as the tenth century. In Van der Linde's opinion, it was from the Mongolians, who conquered China in the thirteenth century, and soon after overran eastern Europe, that the Europeans acquired the art of block printing, or xylography. About the year 1400 this art spread from Germany to Flanders. That the origin of so many innovations belonging to the middle ages, wood printing, printing on cloth, linen paper, and gunpowder, is shrouded in darkness is attributed to the fact that these inventions did not spring up independently in Europe, but came thither through Arabs and Mongolians. The first known date of a woodcut is the year 1423. The Germans at that time, however, did not print with wooden blocks only, but engraved their designs on metal. An exquisite copper engraving bears the date of 1451. The woodcutters and engravers formed, together with the printers, a guild of their own; in Nordlingen, for instance, as early as 1428, and in Ulm in 1441. The importance of Gutenberg's invention did not lie in the discovery of movable type either, for in Roman antiquity movable letters were used; it lay solely in the efficient method discovered of manufacturing metal types of a uniform size. The letters of the alphabet were, first of all, cut in the form of embossed dies or punches; then from these dies or punches were formed matrices or moulds, from which the types were cast. Besides the movableness of the single letters and their combination into words, the production of letters in great numbers was indispensable to the art of printing, in order to substitute for the costly process of cutting each letter separately, the cheapness and uniformity derived from casting a number of types from a single mould.

When, after the conquest of Mentz by the Archbishop Adolphus of Nassau in 1462, the so-called "wonderful secret" had become known throughout Europe, the new art of printing spread with such astounding rapidity that more than a thousand printers, mostly of German origin, are known to have flourished before the year 1500. In Mentz itself, the cradle of the art, there were no less than five printing presses; in Ulm, six; in Basle, sixteen; in Augsburg, twenty; in Cologne, twenty-one. Strasburg was renowned for its many excellent printers. In Nuremberg, up to the year 1500, twenty-five master printers were enrolled as citizens. The most eminent of these after the year 1470 was Anthony Koberger, who had twenty-four presses at work, and employed over a hundred men as typesetters, proof correctors, printers, binders, and illuminators, besides carrying on work outside, chiefly in Basle, Strasburg, and Lyons. By diligence and foresight he accumulated a large fortune. Enterprise of almost equal dimensions was developed by Hans Schönsberger in Augsburg, as well as by the Basle publishers Amerbach-Lachner, and Froben. The latter, designated as the "prince of publishers," ranks among the most accomplished printers whom the world has known. Numbers of able men devoted their energies to the perfecting of the new art. As early as 1471 Schweinheim began printing atlases from metal plates. In the year 1482 Ratbolt made the first attempt to multiply mathematical and architectural drawings by means of the printing press. Oeglin inaugurated the printing of musical notes with movable type.

While Germany was thus alive with the new creative industry, German printers were diffusing the new art as far as Subiaco, Foligno, Sienna, Venice, Modena, Perugia, Urbino, Ascoli, Rome, Naples, Messina, and Palermo. By the end of the fifteenth century Rome alone counted no fewer than 190 presses and 23 German printers, while in the rest of Italy there were over a hundred German printing establishments. It was to a German printer who had come from Mentz to Foligno that Italy owed the first edition of the "Divine Comedy," published in the year 1472. Thanks to German printers, this diffusion of typography was almost as rapid in France and Spain as in Italy. In Spain, by the year 1500, there were over thirty German master printers, who, in Valencia, Saragossa, Seville, Barcelona, Tolosa, Salamanca, Burgos, and other cities were, according to Lope de Vega, the armorers of civilization. Christopher Columbus worked for a time at the printing trade. In Granada, only two years after the province had been freed from the Moors, and while it was still largely peopled with them, a Nuremberg physician, travelling through the Iberian peninsula, met with three printers from Strasburg, Spires, and Gerleshofen. Valentin Ferdinand, one of many German printers settled in Portugal, was, in the year 1502, appointed shield bearer to Queen Leonora, and, by decree of John II., all the other German printers in the country were invested with the privileges of nobles attached to the royal household. Gutenberg's partner, Peter Schöffer, developed a printing business in Paris which was valued in 1475 at 2,425 golden thalers, a large sum for the period. In the south of France, Lyons was the centre of the book traffic. The so-called "German art" was established in Budapest in the year 1473, in London in 1477, in Oxford in 1478, in Denmark in 1482, in Stockholm in 1483, in Moravia in 1486, and in Constantinople in 1490. Even at Cettinje, in Montenegro, there was a printing press in 1493.

II.

The notion that the reading of the Bible first became common after the Reformation is shown by Janssen to have no foundation. During the fifteenth century the Bible well-nigh monopolized most of the printing presses of the West. Up to 1500 the Latin version, known as the Vulgate, had gone through nearly one hundred editions. The first piece of really artistic work in the way of bookbinding from Koberger's press was the exquisite German Bible of 1483, illustrated with over one hundred woodcuts. This remarkable vernacular version of the Holy Scriptures, the clearest and most correct which had yet appeared in German, obtained a wider circulation and had greater influence than any of the other ante-Lutheran Bibles. In addition to this version, however, fifteen other translations of the Bible were issued by the same house before the close of the century, and nine by the house of Amerbach of Basle between 1479 and 1489. Next to the Bible, the leading German publishers of the day, who themselves were, as a rule, highly educated men, turned their attention to bringing out worthy editions of the Fathers of the Church and the old scholastics, as also of the works of contemporary philosophers and theologians. The new invention was also used in the service of the ancient classics. Finally, publications for the people, chiefly the work of the clergy, appeared in large numbers, such as prayer books, catechisms, manuals of confession, books of homilies, collections of sacred and secular songs, wall calendars, and also a number of popular works on natural science and medicine. The books, naturally, which had the largest sale and widest circulation were oftenest produced, and it is a fact full of significance that the Bible reached more than one hundred editions, while of the "Imitation of Christ," translated into different languages, there were no fewer than fifty-nine printed editions before the year 1500. From the evidence before him Janssen concludes that 1,000 was the usual number of copies issued in a single edition, though larger editions would be put forth of devotional books, or of the writings of distinguished men. Of "The Praise of Folly," by Erasmus, for instance, an edition of 1,800 copies was issued in 1515. An immense proportion of the books printed in Germany in the fifteenth century were destroyed in the religious and civil wars, or have since been lost through neglect. The number preserved, however, is computed at over 30,000, many of them works of three or more thick folio volumes.

The belief that elementary education was due to the reformers has no foundation in fact. Janssen points out that in the district of the Middle Rhine in the year 1500 there were whole stretches of country where a family school was to be found within a circuit of every six miles. Small parishes of only five hundred or six hundred souls were not without their village schools. Throughout the empire, indeed, except in the Mark of Brandenburg, the number of schools was considerable. In many places, also, there were largely attended girls' schools. One of these, founded at Xanten in 1497, had eighty-four scholars from both the nobility and the citizen classes. The citizens of Lübeck founded the Cloister of St. Anna, in order that the education of their daughters might be carried on in their own city. Special schools were likewise erected for the children of the nobility. We may judge how highly the function of school keeper was respected by the high salary which he commanded. Up to the end of the middle ages, no complaints are heard from teachers of insufficient pay. At a time when a florin would buy from 90 to 100 pounds of beef, or from 100 to 125 pounds of pork, the schoolmaster of a small hamlet near Goch received the following remuneration: From the parish, 4 florins, 12 bushels of barley, 8 bushels of wheat, 8 bushels of oats, and 60 bundles of straw, besides house and kitchen garden, and the use of one-third of an acre of meadow land; also, from each pupil, a monthly school fee of five stivers in winter and three in summer; and for services in the church, a yearly sum of about two to three florins. In the archives of another town is preserved a decree, dated in 1510, that each peasant who wished his children taught should pay the teacher three stivers, four bushels of corn, and, if he owned a wagon, a load of wood. In Goch the head school teacher had been receiving since 1450, in addition to his house and school fees and presents of different sorts from the children, eight florins yearly; to which income was added, later on, from the church bounty, the sum of three and a half golden florins for the singing of lauds with his pupils; the salary of the town clerk at the same period was only five florins, and that of each of the two burgomasters only two and a half florins. At Eltville, in the Rheingau, the schoolmaster received yearly twenty-four florins, besides a money gift from each child; the teachers in Kiedrich in the Rheingau received from thirty to ninety guilders; in the schools at Culmbach and Bayreuth the yearly pay of the Latin teachers was seventy-five gold florins, besides board and lodging. It is only by comparison with the cost of living at universities that we can appreciate the height of the income of schoolmasters at this epoch. The whole annual expenses of a young nobleman at the University of Erfurt, including college fees, clothing, laundry, and board and lodging for himself and a private tutor, came only to twenty-six florins. At the beginning of the sixteenth century a student from Frankfort paid but ten florins a year for board and lodging in the house of a professor of the Freiburg University. The stipends of the village schoolmasters seem very large when compared with the income of the architect of Frankfort cathedral, which did not exceed from ten to twenty florins a year, or with that of the first Chamberlain of the mother of the Elector of Palatine, which was thirty florins a year. The principal defects in the school system of the day seem to have been the frequent change of teachers and the existence of what were called "travelling students, bacchants, and shooters." The Swiss Thomas Platt wrote, in 1510, on his visit to Breslau: "It is said there are several thousand bacchants and tutors in the city who live by alms."

III.

When we read of the peasants' war in Germany we are apt to forget that it did not precede, but followed, the Reformation. The state of things against which the husbandmen were driven to revolt did not exist in the latter half of the fifteenth century. The truth is that at the close of the middle ages most of the land in Germany was virtually in the hands of the tenants, the lords of the soil merely receiving rent or service for it. By degrees the possessions of tenants had become as independent as were those of free peasants. Serfdom, which became so general after the close of the social revolution of the sixteenth century, was only known in the fifteenth century among the peasants of Pomerania. Even of these a contemporary writer said: "The peasants of Pomerania pay a modest toll, and render besides certain personal services. They are well to do, and, when they no longer wish to belong to the manor, they can, with the permission of the landlord, sell their holdings, and pay him a tenth of the price. Then they are free to go and take their children where they will." The great agricultural prosperity which prevailed in most parts of Germany placed the peasantry of the later middle ages in a position to which their condition in subsequent times offers a sad contrast. The contemporary writer whom we have just quoted pointed out: "In Pomerania the peasants are rich, their wearing apparel being mostly of English and other costly cloth, such as the nobility and citizens in easy circumstances wore in former times." So well off were the peasants of Altenburg that they wore caps of bearskins and coral necklaces to which were hung pieces of gold and silk ribbons, which were then very expensive. Another contemporary writer puts the following words in the mouth of the nobility: "There is more lent out now to one peasant than to ten of us, and he invests it as pleases him." In 1507 Wimpheling observed of the Alsatian peasantry: "The prosperity of the peasants here and in most parts of Germany has made them proud and luxurious. I know peasants who spend as much at the marriage of their sons and daughters, or the baptism of their infants, as would buy a small house and farm or vineyard. They are extravagant in their dress and living, and drink costly wines." The Austrian chronicler, Unrest, remarked in the year 1478 of the peasants of Carinthia: "No one earns more money than they. It is generally acknowledged that they wear better clothes and drink better wine than the nobles." It was, consequently, not without reason that in 1497 ordinances were passed in Landau and other places forbidding "the common peasants to wear cloths costing more than half a florin the yard, silk, velvet, pearls, gold, or slashed garments."

Day laborers and servants were better off, comparatively, even than the peasants at the close of the middle ages. It is a matter of verification by statistics that wages were never before so high, and the large number of people who had to live by hard labor were never before or since so well situated as during the period from the end of the fifteenth century through the first decade of the sixteenth. In order to rightly estimate the pay of the day laborer and servants at that time, it is needful to consider the cost of the necessaries of life. For northern Germany, Janssen examines the reports gathered in Saxony. From the years 1455 to 1480, the average price of a pair of common shoes was from two to three groschen; for a domestic fowl, half a groschen; for a pike, one groschen; for a sheep, four groschen; for twenty-five stockfish, four groschen; for a cord of wood, delivered, five groschen; for a yard of best native cloth, five groschen; for a bushel of rye, six groschen. At the same date a day laborer earned weekly from six to eight groschen, or, we might say, the price of a sheep and a pair of shoes; with the earnings of twenty-four days he could purchase at least one bushel of rye, twenty-five stockfish, a cord of firewood, and two to three yards of cloth. Clothing was particularly cheap. A chorister in Leipsic would pay seven groschen for the making of a coat, trousers, jacket, and a hat. The Duke of Saxony wore a hat which cost three groschen and a half. They were good times for the Saxon laborer when wages were high and the prices of necessaries low. One can understand the complaints of the workmen in the middle of the sixteenth century when we consider that, while their wages were increased only six pennies, the price of rye rose from six to twenty-four groschen per bushel, the price of a sheep from four, to eighteen groschen, and so on with the other necessaries.

During the fifteenth century at Augsburg, in an average year one could purchase from six to seven pounds of the best meat by one day's work; in poor years one pound of meat or seven eggs, a quart of peas, a measure of wine and what bread he needed, and still retain the half of his wages to pay for clothing, lodging, and other necessaries. In Cleves, on the lower Rhine, a laborer who was fed in the house of his employer could, with six days' wages buy a quarter of a bushel of rye, ten pounds of pork or twelve of veal, six large jugs of milk, two bundles of wood, and have a weekly surplus that, in from four to five weeks, would enable him to purchase a blouse, six yards of cloth, and a pair of shoes. It is known that in Aix-la-Chapelle, at the close of the fourteenth century, the wages of six days' labor would buy a lamb, seven sheep, and eight pigs, while one day's earnings would purchase two geese. We note, finally, that, in 1464, in the principality of Bayreuth, the laborers received eighteen pence per day, while they could buy the best beef for two pence per pound and sausage for a penny. The decrease in the use of animal food in the sixteenth century was one of the most striking proofs of the depression of general prosperity throughout Germany. The wages were only half of what they had been between 1450 and 1500. Animal food, formerly the ordinary diet of the people, became, by degrees, an article of luxury. A similar change took place in England, France, and Italy. The laboring classes were much better off at the close of the fifteenth century than they are to-day in any country in Europe.

We pass to the earnings of skilled labor, organized, as this was, in guilds. At Klosterneubourg, between 1485 and 1509, at a time when beef cost two deniers a pound, the day's wage of carpenters and masons was twenty deniers in summer and sixteen in winter. In Saxony, at the same period, a carpenter or mason received daily two groschens and four pennies, or, in other words, the price of a third of a bushel of wheat. Besides this pay each mason in Meissen (Saxony) had a right to two jugs of "hornet daily, and weekly three groschens as bath money." Six days' wages would buy three sheep and a pair of shoes. The large sums given in those days by artisans for benevolent objects show in what comfortable circumstances they were. The journeymen of the Bakers' Guild in Colmar paid twenty florins, equivalent, according to the present value of money, to two hundred marks, for two wax candles to be used in the Corpus Christi procession. In the year 1498 sixteen of the journeymen of the Shoemakers' Guild at Xanten gave fifty-seven florins for a picture and a decoration of the altar. The prosperous condition of the artisan class is also proved by the frequent warnings against extravagance in dress. At the Diets of Augsburg and Freiburg it was decided in the years 1498 and 1500 that journeymen should not buy cloth for their gaiters and hoods which cost more than three-fourths of a florin per yard; for coats and mantles they must use domestic cloth not costing more than half a florin a yard; they were forbidden to wear "gold, silver, pearls, velvet, silk camlet, or embroidered clothes."

IV.

It is not generally known that, during the fifteenth century, Germany was the Mexico and Peru of Europe. In 1458 Æneas Sylvius, afterward Pope, writing of the wealth of Germany, said: "Veins of gold and silver are still discovered; in Bohemia, the mines of Mount Kulten; in Saxony, the mines of Mount Ramil; in Meissen, the mines of Freiberg, the mines of Gesi and of Schneeberg, give evidences of gold and silver. The Dukes of Austria work silver mines in the valleys of the Tun and Ems. Gold dust sparkles in the waters of the Rhine; there are rivers in Bohemia in which the Taborites find lumps of gold the size of peas. Iron and copper, also, are to be found in Germany, with gold in large quantities in Hungary." When, in 1471, the rich mines of Schneeberg, in Saxony, were opened, the town of the same name sprang into existence as if by enchantment. The working of the Bohemian mines, Joachimsthal, in 1516 was followed by the same result. Such sudden increase of population has only been equalled by the growth of cities in California and Nevada. The silver mines discovered in the Erzgebirge in 1471 were among the richest in Germany. During the first thirty years they yielded 352,000 quintals of ore. The mining syndic had tables and chairs made of the raw material. In 1477 the Duke Albert Edward of Meissen ate off such a table weighing 400 quintals. The miners were frequently paid in bars of ore instead of coin. The Bohemian ore was so productive that, in the region of Bergreichenstein alone 350 gold mills were kept busy. In the course of two hundred years over 40,000,000 of florins in gold and silver were coined from the mines of Salzburg. The country of the Tyrol also was rich in the precious metals. The banks of the River Adige were looked upon in upper Germany as an inexhaustible source of gold. The Austrian royal family derived an income of 300,000 gold florins from the mines of Schwaz alone, and in 1493 no fewer than 840,000 silver marks were coined from the same mine. England, at this period, imported silver from North Germany, as Denmark and Sweden did from the Hanseatic cities nearest to them. A contemporary writer records that the German merchants established in foreign cities carried with them pieces of gold and silver furniture weighing from 30 to 100 pounds. "It was," he adds, "no uncommon thing to eat off gold and silver plates at the merchants' tables, as I myself did, in company with eleven other guests, in the city of Cologne." In a chronicle of 1493 we read: "Germany is rich and powerful through her commerce and industry. In mineral wealth she is second to no country in the world; for all nations, Italians, French, Spaniards, and others, get nearly all their silver from Germany."

It is common to explain the decline of the German cities by the discovery of the route to the Indies round the Cape of Good Hope. Undoubtedly, the discovery of this route changed the current of commerce between Europe and Asia and ultimately affected Germany perceptibly. So long, however, as Poland offered a great market for imported commodities, the South German cities which were most exposed to damage through the change of routes through Asia continued to enjoy prosperity. The merchants of Nuremberg and Augsburg quickly recognized that, by reason of their central position in Europe, they could avail themselves of the new route through Lisbon. It is to be noted that Vasco da Gama was assisted by a German in his first voyage to the Indies. As early as 1503 the Welsers and other South German merchants founded a commercial establishment at Lisbon, and obtained from the King, Dom Emanuel, on the payment of taxes, the right to erect warehouses both within and without the city walls. By a charter of 1504 the German company founded by the Welsers received permission to join in the expedition to India, and to send some of their merchant ships with the royal fleet. The fitting out of the German contingent cost 66,000 florins, but those who organized it made a profit of 175 per cent. In the year 1519 Francis I. of France called Frankfort the first business city, not alone of Germany, but almost of the world.

V.

In a chapter on popular life as reflected by art, there is abundant evidence that the peasant of the fifteenth century was not an oppressed boor, condemned to a life of sordid vulgarity, as he became after the social revolution of the sixteenth century, but a sturdy, independent being, full of courage and spirit. Having the right to bear arms, he was as well equipped for self-protection as any city guild associate; he took part in public life and sat in district courts. Thanks to the number of *genre* pictures, done by the best artists of the time, we can contrast the manners of the day with those of later times. On a miniature is represented a market scene, in which women and young girls recommend their wares and offer them for sale—white bread and butter on a white plate, eggs in baskets, and milk in jugs. Pigeons and young chickens are tied in hampers, which are carried on the heads of the women. The hair, divided in the middle, is allowed to hang loose by the young girls, while by the older women it is hidden under a handkerchief, which hangs loosely down on the sides under the chin. An inspection of the still extant inventories of the wardrobes of well-to-do citizens will give us some idea of the luxury and variety of dress at the close of the middle ages. In the will of the wife of George Winter of Nuremberg, dated 1485, mention is made, among other things, of four mantles of Malines silk, six long overskirts, three smock frocks, three underdresses, six white aprons, two white and one black bath cloaks. Along with other jewels, thirty rings are enumerated. In 1490 a citizen of Breslau contributed to his daughter's trousseau a fur-lined mantle and dress, four dresses of different values, several caps, sashes, and armlets, a bodice embroidered with pearls, and a betrothal ring worth twenty-five florins. Another citizen's daughter received in 1470 from her guardians as her inheritance from her mother thirty-six gold rings, besides several chains, buckles, and cinctures. Even among the working classes there was a great variety in the color as well as in the shapes of clothes. Stonecutters and carpenters worked in costumes consisting of a red coat with blue trousers and cap, or in a yellow coat with red trousers and cap; others again are represented in light blue and green, mixed with yellow and red. The tradesmen behind their counters also wore the same bright colors. A peasant bringing his pig to market wears red hat, a green coat, and brown trousers. A truckman wheeling a hogshead before him appears in a red coat lined with green, red cap, blue hose, and bronze riding boots. The village dandies delighted in producing ridiculous effects by the multitude of colors worn at the same time. One side of their costume would be of one hue, while the other was composed of all the shades of the rainbow divided into different figures; others would appear in red from head to foot. Embroidery was also much used. In the year 1464, Bernard Rohrbach from Frankfort had the sleeves of his coat so richly embroidered that they had eleven ounces of silver on them. On the other hand, scientific and professional men wore long, full robes, reaching to the feet, almost always of a dark color, but occasionally red. A simple biretta-like cap covered their close-cut hair. Distinct costumes for each rank and position were characteristic of German life as depicted by German art.

The room in which Dürer depicts St. Jerome has two windows with small round panes; the ceiling is of dark timber; in the corner is an antique oak table, on which are a crucifix and an inkstand; the furniture is ample and comfortable. In the background are to be seen the large hourglass which was considered an indispensable accessory in all well-regulated households; a row of tapers ready lighted, flasks of balsam, and a medicine case stocked with household remedies. There also is a leather portfolio with writing materials, and a pair of large scissors. Beside the rosary lies a brush; from the ceiling hangs a gourd; under the bench are thick-soled sabots. Anything that may be wanting to make this a complete picture of a German home is added by Dürer in the bedroom of St. Anna, after the birth of the Virgin. Here a wide stairway, with heavy balustrades, leads from the end of the room to an upper storey; near the door, whose massive locks attract attention, is a washstand, with all its conveniences, towels and brushes hanging near. On a shelf are seen a richly bound prayer book, a handsome candlestick, spice and medicine boxes. In front of the window is drawn up one of the comfortable seats which are yet to be seen in old German houses. There are no chairs in the room, but, instead, several cushioned seats. The table is massive, and the national carved chest, the repository of the choice household linen, stands in the corner. St. Anna lies in a canopied bed, and is in the act of taking some soup or other recuperative beverage. Everything around her bespeaks the perfection of housekeeping. The sponsors and neighbors gathered together are refreshing themselves with food and drink, and one stout housewife, in full armor of side pocket, bunch of keys, and chatelaine, seems particularly anxious for a draught. A maid servant is in the act of bringing in a cradle and a bath for the infant Mary.

VI.

Nothing that was in daily use was too trivial or ignoble to be beautified. The hand of the artist was observable in the balustrade, the ceiling, the doors and windows, the stoves, and the candelabra. Even the common kitchen furniture of a burgher's house, of which some samples are still extant, bears witness to similar care. It was not without justice, therefore, that Wimpheling, writing in 1507, declared that Germany deserved universal admiration, not only on account of its creations in painting, sculpture, and architecture, but also for the originality displayed in the making of common things. While architecture, sculpture and painting, wood-cutting, and copper engraving were making remarkable progress, music also was, by degrees, approaching perfection. From the middle of the fifteenth century, the number of German composers was unusually large and their compositions were of high merit. On the basis of the Gregorian Chant, the German masters built up the new style of church music, in the polyphonous structures by which the whole meaning of the old church hymns was developed. William Du Fay, Jacob Obrecht, and Johann Ockenheim are considered the pioneers of all musical schools down to our own times. Obrecht, supposed to have been born on the Rhine, far surpassed Ockenheim in sublimity and in simple beauty of style. Another distinguished composer of religious hymns in the fifteenth century was Heinrich Finck, Capelmeister to the Polish court at Cracow, from 1492. In the treatment of secular subjects, a like excellence was attained. Almost all the foremost writers of sacred music composed exquisite melodies for the national lyrics, and not seldom struck a chord which finds an echo to this day. The melody, for instance, composed by Heinrich Isaak for the song attributed to the Emperor Maximilian, "Innsbrück! I must leave thee," is of world-wide fame, and the air by the same composer to the words, "My only joy in the wide world," remains an expression of all that is sweet and tender in the German national character. As the new figurate music—so called to distinguish it from the unrhythmic, unisonous plain song which it had begun to supersede—was developed, the desire arose to perfect the instruments for its performance. The first improvement was made in the organ. A German craftsman living in Venice, named Bernhard, hit upon the idea of tuning the manual of the organ an octave higher and accompanying the more beautiful quality of sound thus produced by repeating the bass notes in a lower octave. His invention of the pedals about 1470 transformed the instrument into a mighty fabric. By the beginning of the sixteenth century nearly all the principal cities in Germany possessed organs with pedals. In proportion as the instrument itself was improved, the players of it became skilful, and in the early years of the fifteenth century several priests and monks earned high reputations as organists. The art of lute playing, like the finer organ playing, owed its origin to Nuremberg; the lutes made there about 1460 were sought after from far and near.

To sum up the purport of these volumes, we find that the fifteenth century was, in truth, the golden age of Germany. It was a time when culture penetrated to all classes of society, spreading its ramifications deep and wide; a time of extraordinary activity in art and learning. By catechetical teaching, by sermons in the vernacular, by translations of the Scripture, by instructional and devotional publications of all sorts, religious knowledge was diffused and the development of religious life promoted. In the elementary schools and middle schools a sound basis of popular education was established, while the universities attained a height of excellence and distinction undreamt of before. More even than learning, art seemed to blossom and develop, beautifying all the departments of life, public and private, secular and ecclesiastic, while in its many noble and comprehensive works, inspired by the prevailing sense of Christian brotherhood, it manifested the real core of the German genius and character. M. W. H.

The Home Rule Parliament.

From his own notes, made from day to day for the London *Daily News*, Mr. HENRY W. LUCY has compiled, and Messrs. Cassell & Co. have published, *A Diary of the Home Rule Parliament*, which lasted from August, 1892, to July, 1895. It will be remembered that the general election of July, 1892, restored Mr. Gladstone to power, but only with a majority of forty, which he himself pronounced "too small, too small." Even this majority, through various causes, but chiefly through the defection of the nine Parnellite members, was ere long signally reduced; nevertheless, the Liberal party managed to pass a Home Rule bill through the House of Commons, and to remain in office for nearly three years, being finally beaten not on any important measure, but on a motion to reduce the salary of the Secretary of State for War, by way of marking the disapproval of his administration in the matter of cordite stores. The story of these three years will be found set forth in Mr. Lucie's book in abundance of detail, and illuminated here and there with short sketches of conspicuous public men. It is these snap-shot portraits to which we purpose to invite attention, omitting the references to deceased statesmen like Lord Randolph Churchill, or to men like Mr. Mundella, who are politically dead.

I.

Of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, we read on pages 434-435 that his most formidable opponent is his own dead self. It is pronounced a "misfortune that he should be a master of clean-cut phrase, a forger of unerring bolts of declamation and denunciation. When he has anything to say, whether the averment be that a particular thing is white or black, he says it in a manner that goes straight home to the understanding and lingers long in the memory. If a wet sponge could be passed over the record of his public speeches up to the end of 1885 and no echo of them linger in the memory of man, his position in the politics of to-day would be immeasurably strengthened. That is impossible. Mr. Chamberlain, when now he rises to address the House of Commons, is ever faced by the ghost of his dead self, wrestling with whom is a much more exhausting and damaging exercise than any mere battling with Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Asquith, or even the ruthless Mr. Tim Healy." Mr. Lucy, however, bears testimony to the fact that nothing can exceed the coolness and courage with which Mr. Chamberlain faces these terrible odds. "While he is on his legs, and in command of the House, he shows no sign of consciousness of the presence of the supernatural adversary. He knows, even better than close students on the Treasury Bench of his former speeches, what he once said. If he were disposed to forget particular past turns of argument, he has no opportunity, since their echoes rumble daily through every political speech, whether made in Parliament or on the platform. A debater of rare skill, he might, if he chose, shirk nasty turnings, that inevitably lead back to the well-thumbed volume of his speeches, published ten years ago. But he takes every fence, dodges no ditch, and, on resuming his speech, bears with unflinching calmness the inevitable punishment."

It is well known that the task of leading the House of Commons after Mr. Gladstone's retirement from public life was a hard one, calculated to tax the most even and serene of tempers. In the case of Sir William Harcourt the strain, mental and physical, fell upon a temperament naturally explosive. Mr. Lucy recalls an incident connected with Mr. Gladstone's successor in the leadership of the House of Commons, dating back to the far distant time when he was Mr. Vernon Harcourt, earning a living at the Parliamentary bar. It seems that in one railway case he had a difference with the Chairman of the committee, who had called him to order on a particular point. "Oh, very well," said Mr. Harcourt, hotly, "if I am not to be heard, it is just as well the fact should be made known." "Clear the room!" said the Chairman, quietly. The order having been obeyed, and counsel, witnesses, and the general public having withdrawn, the Chairman appealed to the committee to say whether, in his remarks, he had been personally offensive to the counsel or had in any sense exceeded the limits of his authority. The answer being unanimously in the negative, the doors were reopened and the public admitted. With them came Mr. Harcourt, wondering what the proceedings might portend. He was not long left in doubt. The Chairman said: "Mr. Harcourt, before you proceed with your address it will be necessary for you to apologize for the remark you last addressed to the Chair." For all answer the learned and irate counsel flung down his brief, and, with head erect, strode out of the committee room.

II.

It is well known that Mr. A. J. Balfour was the leader of the Conservatives in the Home Rule Parliament. On page 327 we learn how he discharged this function: "Mr. Arthur Balfour has now finally settled in the saddle of leader of the Opposition, and rides well. There was a time when it seemed as if he were loath to stay, finding the drudgery of leadership uncongenial. He came late, went away early, and, when he took part in debate, displayed an air of aloofness and indifference that was very curious. That is all changed now. He sticks to his post, and is always on the alert for a chance of conducting operations against the enemy. In the short stretch of session already passed he has found opportunity of making three speeches, each different in its way, combining to establish his Parliamentary position on a firm basis. One was on the address, when he paid an eloquent tribute to Mr. Gladstone; the second on the Ministerial crisis, when he played his part with great skill; the third when he found himself placed by Lord Randolph Churchill in a difficult position, since he could not support his motion against Lord Rosebery, and would not throw over a friend. He managed to dance among the eggs with a vigorous grace that delighted the House." On page 285 a parallel is drawn between Mr. Balfour and Mr. Asquith: "There are two comparatively young men in the House, both advanced by leaps and bounds into foremost positions, both certain, if they live, to attain the highest pinnacle, who are curiously dissimilar in manner. Mr. Balfour is, according to the almanac, four years older than Mr. Asquith." We are assured, however, that in manner the latter is at least forty years older than the former. "No one seeing Mr. Asquith answering Mr. Darling on the subject of Anarchist meetings in Trafalgar square, or replying to Mr. John Redmond as to his intentions with respect to the dynamite prisoners, would imagine that a gleam of humor ever irradiated his mind or lighted his pathway. Those who know him off the bench are aware that this is a misapprehension. Mr. Asquith's supernaturally grave manner on the Treasury bench is, like Hamlet's inky cloak, an outward semblance proper to the occasion. His humor, even in lightest moments, is perhaps a little grim. It certainly is not lacking. Mr. Arthur Balfour, on the contrary, ever bubbles over with lighthearted humor, a sunny nature breaking through all the clouds that cares of State may bring. This natural gift is one of inestimable value to a leader in the House of Commons. Like the quality of mercy, it is twice blest."

III.

Of Mr. John Morley the author of these diurnal jottings writes in a discriminative, but, on the whole, sympathetic way. "It was almost fatally late in life that he (Morley) entered the arena of active politics. He was in his forty-sixth year when he entered the House of Commons as member for Newcastle, a splendid age, the very prime of manhood, but, except in rare cases, too far advanced for happy entrance upon a term of apprenticeship in the House of Commons. Mr. Morley ranks to-day as one of the ablest debaters in the House. But the position was slowly acquired. He always had it in him, but could not, for some time, get it out, or, to be more accurate, could not be induced to let himself go. To his almost ascetic literary taste the looser style of expression, more fitting for a public audience, was shocking." We are told that those present will not forget his maiden speech, looked forward to with interest in the House of Commons, but listened to with a feeling of disappointment his warmest friends could not disguise. "It happened that he followed, at a brief interval, the late Mr. Joseph Gillis Biggar. That personage was in his primest mood. Lord Randolph Churchill had sparkled earlier in the evening, and Joey B., who shared with the monkey its mimetic faculty, had, as was his custom, unconsciously adopted a travesty of the noble lord's incisive style and emphatic manner. The House roared with delighted laughter. Mr. Biggar, fluent, self-possessed, never at a loss for a word, not too particular as to its *nuance* of meaning, talked on for a full half hour, as complete a master of this critical assembly as was Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Bright. Then came John Morley, with his carefully thought-out treatise, glistening with polished sentences, gleaming through profound depths of thought. The House generously cheered him when he rose, and sat in silent sympathy as he painfully struggled through the opening sentences of his speech." Mr. Lucy adds that it was a "curious contrast, not without its note of sadness, to think of Mr. Biggar saying nothing with easy fluency, and to look on this embodiment of culture, this man teeming with thoughts, this master of a perfect literary style, standing with parched lips and strained eyes, endeavoring to recite his sedulously prepared essay." The turning point in Mr. Morley's Parliamentary career was an incident which occurred a year or two before the general election of 1892. Thousands of delegates from the Liberal party, assembled in conference at Leeds, were in high spirits, which eventually communicated themselves to the austere statesman on the platform. Delivering himself from the trammels of his notes, Mr. Morley talked to his enthusiastic auditors in a frank, hearty manner, which delighted them and probably astonished himself. He has never turned aside from the new departure made that night. "It was," says Mr. Lucy, "as if a man, floating on the water, had by accident been deprived of his life belt, and discovered that he could swim very well without it. Mr. Morley will never plunge into the stream of debate, whether in the House of Commons or on the platform, with the burly joyousness that distinguishes Sir William Harcourt. But he improves every year, and made a long stride forward during the recent contest at Newcastle," which followed his acceptance of office in Mr. Gladstone's last Cabinet. Wound up to a high pitch by the excitement of the contest, Mr. Morley, finding himself on the platform or talking to enthusiastic crowds in the street, finally "let himself go" with happiest results. Never before had he spoken with such force or effect, and Mr. Lucy's prediction is that never will he be again "borne down by the mystical burden of a House of Commons audience, whose influence he early admitted his inability to dissect or define."

IV.

We find a reference to Lord Rosebery on pages 99-100, in connection with a speech made by him at a dinner given to Sir Robert Duff, just appointed Governor to New South Wales. The author notes that Lord Rosebery's discourse on this occasion was marked by something more than his "usual felicity." Mr. Lucy goes on to term it "a happy accident that, in successive Foreign Secretaries in Liberal Administrations, the country has found two of the most charming after-dinner speakers of the day. Lord Rosebery's style is much akin to Lord Granville's in respect of grace and delicacy of touch. Where a difference comes in, it is to be found in the circumstance that Lord Granville was more polished, and Lord Rosebery is more vigorous. Lord Granville played round the victim of his gentle humor, almost apologetically pinking him with polished rapier. Lord Rosebery will do that sometimes, but occasionally, as the late Lord Brabourne knew, he is capable of delivering a blow straight from the shoulder on the visage of a deserving object. His oratorical style may be described as English, benefiting by application of French polish. Lord Granville's was French, with an unwonted substratum of what we are pleased to regard as British solidity."

It is apropos of the appearance in Parliament of Mr. Blake, the well-known Canadian statesman, that Mr. Lucy is moved to ask, What is the secret of success in the House of Commons? "It is a question that long ago puzzled Lord Macaulay, and was by him given up as insoluble. Macaulay's own success as a speaker was a mystery, being opposed to all the ordinary canons. He laboriously prepared his orations as if they were fresh chapters of his essays, committed them to memory, and recited them. It would be interesting to know whether, if he sat for Edinburgh to-day, he would fill the House of Commons as he did on the occasions of which graphic record is enshrined in Sir George Trevelyan's life of his revered uncle. If he were a success it would be an additional triumph, for no other man working on similar or analogous lines can to-day entrance the attention of the House." With regard to Mr. Blake it is pointed out that he came over with a reputation established upon a sound basis in Canada, where his admirers were pleased to regard him as a kind of colonial Gladstone. When the Irish party, shaken with the long conflict in committee room No. 15, invited Mr. Blake to come over and help them, it was generally felt that an adroit move had been made. His acceptance of the invitation seemed to promise almost compensation for the loss of Mr. Parnell. Mr. Lucy describes the occasion when Mr. Blake gave the House of Commons an opportunity of estimating the value of the new addition to its forces. "He spoke for the hour and a half, which has come to be the statutory extension of speech in the current debate. He was fluent, evidently well informed. His phrases were excellent; the House was determined to be pleased but, to tell the melancholy truth, the whole thing was exceedingly wearisome. There was throughout it something subtly but distinctly colonial. The House listened with the sedulous politeness due to his position, character, and the accident of his being, in some sense, a visitor. But it was unmistakably bored at what partook rather of the characteristics of a lecture than of the life and vigor of a speech." The author's notion is that "Mr. Blake is under the fatal disadvantage of having entered the House of Commons too late in life, and is further handicapped by ingrained habits of thought and speech cultured in another world."

Of Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, who was the innocent cause of the overthrow of the Rosebery Cabinet, we are told that he was "among the ablest, certainly the most popular, member of the Government. He had the distinction, rare with a Secretary of State for War, of pleasing both civilians and soldiers. Lord Wolseley, talking to a friend on the subject, emphatically said: 'In my experience, pretty long now, Campbell-Bannerman is the most capable War Minister I have known or had dealings with.'" Elsewhere we read that "Mr. Campbell-Bannerman is happily gifted by nature with a temper of almost imperturbable serenity. That there are possibilities of explosion has been hinted more than twice in his Parliamentary career, but, on the whole, he may be counted invulnerable. It was this gift of nature, combined with a sense of humor, which disproves the stale libel about Scotchmen, that made his term of office as Chief Secretary for Ireland a memorable success. When, in 1884, Sir George Trevelyan, prematurely gray-haired, was hounded out of the Irish office, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman's appearance as his successor took away the breath of the Irish members, then in fullest, most successful practice of the art or science of obstruction. They attempted with the new Secretary the tactics that had almost worried to death the highly strung nature of his predecessor. Mr. Campbell-Bannerman only smiled at them, or blandly jested at their simulated wrath. As was said at the time, the English Channel, in its stormiest moods, raged round Beachy Head with equal effect to that wrought upon the new Chief Secretary by the then united Irishmen."

V.

It was during the Home Rule Parliament that Mr. John E. Redmond made his mark in the House. The author of this book bears witness that he then "strode into the front rank of Parliamentary debaters. His manner of delivery is excellent. He has a melodious voice, perfectly under control. His diction is pure, free from the gaudy colors which come natural to some of his countrymen, and yet, as was shown toward the end of his speech, capable of sustained flights of lofty eloquence. These are matters of manner, and it is truer in the House of Commons than anywhere else that manner makes the man. Mr. Redmond's oratorical style, as the House discovered, is based upon a substratum of solid knowledge, sound common sense, and a statesmanlike capacity to review a complicated situation. Circumstances happening within the past three months have devolved upon the leader of the small Parnellite party the necessity of tacking. Those—chiefly found amongst his own countrymen—most fully acquainted with the exigencies of the hour were most fervid in their admiration of the skill with which to-night the manœuvre was carried out. Mr. Redmond's speech was a revelation."

It was in the course of the same session that Mr. Michael Davitt made a speech which is acknowledged to have been a success "in spite of undue length and some evidence of amateurism." Mr. Lucy testifies that "he succeeded in impressing the House with a conviction of his honesty, earnestness, and singleness of purpose, a talisman in the way of earning its esteem and securing its attention. The speech was carefully written out and closely followed from the manuscript. That of itself would have been fatal in most cases. Mr. Davitt managed the reading skilfully, occasionally lapsing into extemporaneous asides, and was, throughout, delightfully unconventional." The fact is recalled that Canning used to say, as he is quoted by Macaulay in a letter written to Whewell more than sixty years ago, that the House of Commons as a body had better taste than the man of best taste in it. "That is true," Mr. Lucy thinks, "in respect of all good qualities, and is the faculty that makes it the incomparable assembly it is. It is more just than the justest man in its ranks; more appreciative than the most sympathetic; more generous than the kindest-hearted. It was piqued on Tuesday by the reflection that the tall, dark man, with the armless sleeve, addressing it, had, not many years before, stood in the dock charged with treason felony, and had, as he incidentally mentioned, served a term of over nine years' penal servitude. Here he was returned by his constituents, upon a footing of equality with the best of them, and the House as a body was resolved that, at least, he should be made to feel at home. When he produced from a recess the fifth package of his manuscript and proposed to 'consider the philosophy of the question,' patience and courtesy were sorely tried. If he had been a many-acred squire or the son of a Duke this movement would have been marked by signs of impatience, perhaps cries for the division. As it was Mr. Davitt, the apology with which he continued his harangue was greeted with a cheer—faint, it is true, but distinctly audible."

In the only reference of any length to Mr. John Dillon, the present leader of the anti-Parnellite party, we are reminded of the deadly blow administered to him by Mr. Chamberlain. The latter had alluded to a speech delivered by Mr. Dillon at Castlereagh in 1887, in which the member for East Mayo was reported to have said that, when the Irish Parliament was constituted, they would have the control of things in Ireland, and would then "remember" the police and others who had shown themselves enemies of the people. Mr. Dillon did not dispute the accuracy of the quotation, but urged that the context modified its purport. The gist of his defence—that which manifestly moved the House—was his description of the circumstances under which, as he alleged, the speech was made. It was, he said, a short time after the massacre of Mitchelstown, where he had seen three innocent men shot down in cold blood, the police acting under an officer so bankrupt in character that even Mr. Balfour had to dismiss him. "That recollection," he said, "was hot in my mind when I spoke at Castlereagh." It was not, he added, amid loud cheers from the Ministerialists, "fair or just to rake up language used in such circumstances, and never repeated in cold blood." When Mr. Dillon resumed his seat Mr. Chamberlain sprang to his feet and shot a fatal dart at his antagonist. Mr. Dillon had, he said, declared that he had been influenced in his remarks at Castlereagh by recollections of what took place at Mitchelstown. But when was the affair at Mitchelstown? It was on the 9th of September, 1887, and the speech at Castlereagh from which he (Chamberlain) had quoted was delivered on the 5th of September, 1886. A prolonged burst of cheering from the opposition greeted this statement, and all eyes were turned upon Mr. Dillon, who sat silent, making no sign. Amid renewed cheering Mr. Chamberlain asked how the House could accept the tardy repentance of a man who came down and attempted to palm off a statement of that kind. On the following day Mr. Dillon rose and claimed permission to make a personal statement. Mr. Gladstone was in his place, and gave to the ensuing scene anxious attention. Mr. Dillon frankly admitted that he had the day before made a mistake in his reference to Mitchelstown, and offered the House the fullest apology. He thought it impossible even for his bitterest enemy even to suppose that, as Mr. Chamberlain had put it, he had deliberately attempted to palm off a story which carried on the face of it its own refutation. "I deny," Mr. Dillon emphatically said, "that I entertained the project attributed to me of revenge against those who were opposed to the people of Ireland." "Oh, oh," cried some of the Conservatives, seated above the gangway. "I deny it," Mr. Dillon sternly repeated, turning upon them. "No fair-minded man can find in the six hundred speeches I have delivered in this time of tribulation grounds for the imputation." Mr. Chamberlain, in reply, confined himself to reading a telegram from a gentleman whose trustworthiness no Home Ruler would dispute. "I have," the telegram ran, "read your statement in the *Daily Post* with regard to the dates of the affair at Mitchelstown and of the speech at Castlereagh. It is true and singularly accurate."